

## **REMARKS**

### **I. Status of the Subject Application**

Claims 1-38 are pending in the subject application and stand rejected. In the present Amendment, Applicant has amended claims 12, 16, 19, 22, 24, 25, 27, and 38 and has added claims 39-49.

### **II. The Double Patenting Rejections**

Claims 12-23 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as “claiming the same invention as that of claims 12-23 and 27 of prior U.S. Patent No. 6,688,069.” In the present Amendment, Applicant has amended independent claims 12, 16 and 19 to clarify that the first connector plate has a pair of lateral ends with an upstanding flange formed thereon. Support for such amendments may be found in Figures 5 and 6 of the parent application as originally filed. Claims 22 and 27 have also been amended. Accordingly, Applicant traverses this rejection.

Claims 1-11, 24-27 and 29-38 have been rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-27 of U.S. Patent No. 6,688,069 to Zadeh. Applicant is herewith enclosing a Terminal Disclaimer. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 1-11, 24-27 and 29-38 are deemed overcome.

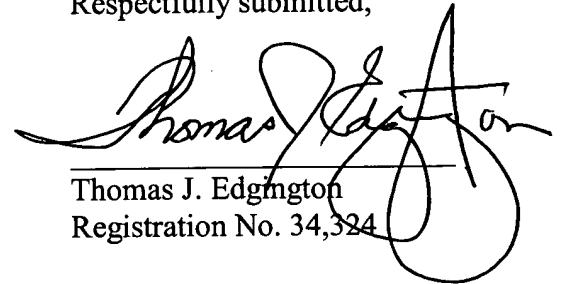
### **III. Conclusion**

Applicant submits that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections in the Official Action and passage to allowance of all the pending claims at an early date are earnestly solicited. However, if the Examiner has any remaining concerns regarding Applicant’s present Amendment, she is invited

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to contact the Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below so that those concerns may be expeditiously addressed.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas J. Edgington", written over a horizontal line.

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